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# IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE

**John 14:2-7**

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**Today I am going to speak about an aspect of our Christian faith; in fact it is the most important one. The primary concern of the Bible is eternal life. Yet it seems to rank second to daily living here on earth. While I was preparing this talk I reviewed the scripture passages that I have written on the blank pages of my Bible. With only two exceptions they all relate to daily living and surviving or enduring hardships, grief and trials of living. When I reviewed my prayer list with only a few exceptions all of my prayers are for those who need are ill, grieving, having marital or family or relational problems, need employment or the church and it's ministries and relational issues. What receives less emphasis is what many of those who are prayed for need most, the promise of salvation and eternal life.**

**Perhaps this really isn't surprising. We live in a society that worships wealth, beauty and youthfulness. The Spam on my email each day promises instant opportunities to become wealthy. The one I received recently one that has all the answers.**

**"Look and feel 10-20 years younger.**
**Increase energy levels by 84%**
**Increase muscle strength by 88%**
**Reduce body fat by 72% wrinkles and cellulite by 51%**
**Lower your blood pressure and improve your cholesterol.**
**Improve sleep, vision and memory.**
**Strengthen your immune system.**
**Just use HGH human growth hormone**

**We see daily advertisements for clothes, make-up, hair styling, hair growth, hair transplants, wigs, all forms of plastic surgery, face lifts, tummy tucks, body sculpting, contact lenses to change the color of your eyes to fit the occasion. We have a long tradition of wanting to be eternally young. It was in the year 1513 when the new world explorer, Juan Ponce de Leon came to Florida looking for the springs of water that would give man eternal life here on earth.**

**Man has always been concerned about life on earth, and the bible has had much to say in response:**

**1Peter 7:22 all men are like grass and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the lord stands forever.**

**Ps 102:11 king David said "my days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass, but thou o lord art enthroned forever.**

**Psalms 90:4 for a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past**

**A man asked God, " a thousand years in you r sight is no more than a minute" yes that is true. Then the man asked and a thousand dollars are no more than a dollar. Yes that is true. Then the man asked God, would you give me a thousand dollars. God said yes my son in a minute.**

**We forget that we are aliens on the planet earth, mere transients with a short life span even in worldly time. God created the heavens and the earth for humankind. He placed us here with the plan that all those who believe in him and accept his son Jesus Christ as our savior would become his children, heirs to the kingdom. He asks us to be his faithful servants to share this good news with family friends and all the earth. He intends for us to have a full life here on earth and be productive in all our days. Perhaps that gives us a sense of eternal life and that is why we cling to our earthly life. But a candid view of the world reveals war, genocide, starvation, disease, extreme poverty, pain sorrow and grief. An honest worldview would cause us to ask, is this all that there is? Even king Solomon exhausted himself in worldly pleasures and concluded that, "Life is vanity, all is vanity.**

**With all our emphasis on earthly life, we sometimes consider salvation and eternal life as a kind of fire insurance, just in case there is a heaven and a hell, like our Baptist brothers remind us. A Baptist preacher once said you don't have to be a Baptist to receive salvation, but why take the chance.**

**On Saturday morning march 9th we held a youth ministry prayer vigil here in this sanctuary. In our discussion later one of the participants said that during the prayer time he had a vision of all our youth and Vacaville aflame for Christ. There are other instances of people on fire for Christ. In acts the apostles and 5 thousand others became afire for Christ when the Holy Spirit came upon them. In 1900 there was a great revival in this country with thousands of people coming to Christ. In Korea in the 1950's and 60's hundreds of thousand came to Christ. The majority became Presbyterians. Today millions of people are coming to Christ in Africa. They are aflame for their savior. Martin Luther King said I have a dream.**

**Horatio G. Spafford had that vision. He was a wealthy merchant who lost his fortune in the great Chicago fire. Not long after that he lost his four daughters in a ship that sank in the Atlantic Ocean. On a trip to England he passed near where his daughter's ship sank and was inspired to write that famous hymn "it is well with my soul"**

**When peace like a river, attendeth my way**
**When sorrows like sea billows roll**
**What ever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,**
**It is well; it is well with my soul**

**There is the story about an older woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and was given 3 months to live. As she began getting her things in order, she called her pastor to discuss her final wishes. She told him the songs for her service, the scriptures to be read. She wanted to be buried with her favorite bible in her left hand. Then she remembered an important last request. I want to be buried holding a fork in my right hand. The pastor was surprised, the woman explained. "You see pastor in all my years of attending church potluck dinners, I remember that when the dishes were being cleared after the main course, someone would lean over and say, "keep your fork." it was my favorite part because I knew that something better was**

**coming, like velvety chocolate cake, something wonderful, and with substance to end the great meal." the pastor listened intently and a smile came upon his face.**

**The woman continued, "so, I just want people to see me there in the casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder....'What's with the fork?'...Then I want you to tell them: "keep your fork.....the best is yet to come".**

**Why were these people aflame with faith, filled with great joy and excitement? It wasn't because they were free of poverty, disease, and oppression sorrow and suffering. It is because they had a vision and a burning hope of eternal life. What is this vision based upon? The promises of our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ his son. They are not insurance; they are the strong affirmation and assurance that all believers have eternal life.**

**What do the scriptures say about eternal life?**

**In Ex 3:6 God tells Moses that "I am the God of your father Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. No past tense, we have a God of the living not a God of the dead.**

**In John 3:16 that popular scripture says, "for God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

**Jesus has said he has gone to prepare a place for us. Part of that preparation is a new creation.**

**2 Pet 12-13 " according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

**1 Cor 5:1 now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from god, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.**

**In Rev 21:1 ff. John said, "that he saw a new heaven and a new earth for the 1st heaven and the first earth passed away. I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from god. I heard a great voice from the throne say, behold the dwelling of god is with men. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more.**

**We will be heirs not only to the new heaven and new earth we have access to all the kingdom of god. We will have a life that is not only eternal, more than endless, but also one that is in complete fullness. We will have the full image of Christ. We will be perfected and fully blessed by God.**

**My brother Dale once said, "God created the heavens and the earth in six days, what an awesome creation." Jesus has been gone to prepare a place for us for over 2 thousand years. Can you begin to imagine what that might be like, no disappointments or boredom in eternity?**

**Our salvation delivers us from sin destruction and death. We enter a new divine life, which is a fore taste of what is to come.**

**In John 10:10 Jesus says, "I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly. The abundant life is eternal life.**

**In John 4:13 Jesus told the woman at the well, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."**

**The final verse of Psalm 23 proudly proclaims, "surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the lord forever.**

**God's love and the Grace of Jesus Christ assures us of our salvation. Jesus said that the kingdom of God is at hand, here and now. When we accept Jesus as our Savior we step through that door into the kingdom of God. Jesus is waiting there to greet us and walk with us through eternity. How can we not proclaim and celebrate his gift of eternal life with great joy and excitement?**

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